

REMARKS

Claims 44-86 are pending in the application. Claims 44, 56 and 80 are being amended. The amendment to claim 44 is based on the description of Fig. 13. The amendments are being made to improve the clarity of the claims.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

Applicants note that the Examiner has acknowledged a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 to Polish Patent Applications No. P-352643, filed March 6, 2002, and No. P-354371, filed on June 10, 2002, and confirmed that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

Oath/ Declaration

The Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has reviewed the Applicant's Oath/Declaration and found it conforming to the requirements prescribed in 37 C.F.R. 1.63.

Drawings

The Applicants also note that the Examiner has accepted drawings submitted by Applicants.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has considered the information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on September 2, 2004.

All outstanding requirements will now be addressed in the order they appear in the Office Action mailed January 7, 2008.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §112

5-6. Claims 44, 56 and 80 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being allegedly indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. The Applicants have amended claims 44, 56, and 80 to obviate Examiner's rejections.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §102 and 103

7-8. Claims 44 – 51, 54 – 66, 68 – 75 and 78 - 86 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by Jones (U.S. Patent No. 7,039,169).

9 - 11. Claims 52, 53, 76 and 77 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Jones in view of Murakami (U.S. Patent App. Pub. No. 2003/0095537).

Applicants respectfully disagree. Specifically, this patent application claims two priority dates: March 6, 2002, and June 10, 2002. Certified copies of the priority documents claimed in this application and English translations thereof along with statements signed by a translator attesting to the correctness of the translations are of record.

However, the earliest possible date as of which Jones could be used as prior art is September 25, 2002 (its filing date), i.e., a date later than both priority dates claimed by Applicants. In addition, the earliest possible date Murakami could be used as prior art reference is May 24, 2002 (its US filing date), i.e., after the first priority date in this case. Accordingly, at least Jones is not a prior art reference against this application.

In addition, with respect to independent claims 44 and 68, neither Jones nor Murakami, alone or in combination, disclose the limitation of “...*the slave decoding device (12) operates when the connection between the master decoding device (11) and the slave decoding device (12) remains unchanged or changes in allowable limits...*” and of “...*allowing the slave decoding device (12) to operate only when the connection between the master decoding device (11) and the slave decoding device (12) remains unchanged or changes in allowable limits...*”.

In light thereof withdrawal of claim rejections under 35 USC 102 and 103 is respectfully requested.

12. Claim 87 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Jones in view of Ayogi (U.S. Patent App. Pub. No. 2002/0032761).

The Applicants submit that claim 87 is not pending in this application. Moreover, it would be improper to combine Jones with Ayogi in light of the fact that Jones is not a prior art reference as discussed above.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable reconsideration is respectfully solicited. Should an extension of time be required, Applicants hereby petition for same and requests that the extension fee and any other fee required for timely consideration of this submission only be charged to **Deposit Account No. 503182**.

Customer Number: **33,794**

Date: March 12, 2008

Respectfully Submitted,

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